



Nutrition Tips for Airline Travel

Effects of Altitude

Although aircraft cabins are pressurized, the barometric pressure is less than on the ground at sea level. For most flights, the cabin pressure is similar to that found at 5000-8000 feet above sea level. The effects are: less oxygen available; and gas within our body cavities expands. This is usually well tolerated by healthy passengers, but it may help to ...

Avoid gas-forming foods or liquids before flight.

Though everyone responds differently to food, here are some foods that most commonly cause distress:

Fruits – apples, apple juice, avocado, bananas, melon, grapes, raisins, watermelon

Vegetables – beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, leeks, onions, split peas, lentils, green peppers, radishes, soybeans

Cereals & Grains – bran cereals, large amounts of wheat products

Miscellaneous – carbonated beverages, chewing gum, hard candy, nuts, alcohol sugars (sorbitol, mannitol), high fat foods



The Cabin Environment: Humidity, Motion, Space

Aircraft cabin humidity is usually less than 20%, which is fairly dry. During a coast-to-coast airplane flight, the low cabin humidity can cause fluid losses of 4 to 6 cups (1000 to 1500 ml)! To minimize discomfort from dryness, it helps to ...

Drink water and juices while minimizing alcohol and caffeinated beverages.

This suggestion is also good advice to help prevent motion sickness (avoid alcohol in-flight, and for the 24 hours prior to flight) and jet leg.

The Carry-On “Pantry”

Limited food choices in-flight and in airports, along with the possibility of unexpected travel delays are good reasons to carry food and beverages with you. Soft-sided coolers are a practical choice for keeping food safe to eat. Frozen juice boxes can be used to keep food cold.

Water
Juices
Smoothies

Cereal
Granola bars
Crackers
Fig cookies



Hard cheese
String cheese
Pudding
PB & J
Yogurt
Tuna

Fruit - fresh, dried
Carrots
Celery
Cherry tomatoes

References:

Aerospace Medical Association <http://www.asma.org>

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